

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION

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September 30, 2004

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

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OCT 4 - 2004

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Attention: Wireline Competition Bureau

Re: State Commission Certification for Rate Comparability
CC Docket No. 96-45

Pursuant to section 54.316 of the FCC's rules, the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission has reviewed the comparability of residential rates in rural areas of the state served by non-rural incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs) to urban rates nationwide, and certifies that the rates are comparable. The Commission makes this attestation by using the safe harbor provision and comparing the residential rates in rural areas served by Qwest, the only non-rural ILEC in New Mexico, to the nationwide urban benchmark of \$34.16. Qwest's current residential rate in rural areas is \$13.50. To this base is added \$10.72 for other mandatory monthly rates as required in 54.316(b) resulting in a total monthly charge for flat-rate service of \$24.22. Therefore, Qwest's rural rates are reasonably comparable to urban rates nationwide.

If additional information is required, please contact Susan Oberlander, 505 827 6950.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Herb H. Hughes in black ink.
COMMISSIONER

cc: Irene Flannery
Universal Service Administrative Company
2000 L Street, N.W. Suite 200
Washington D.C. 20036

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